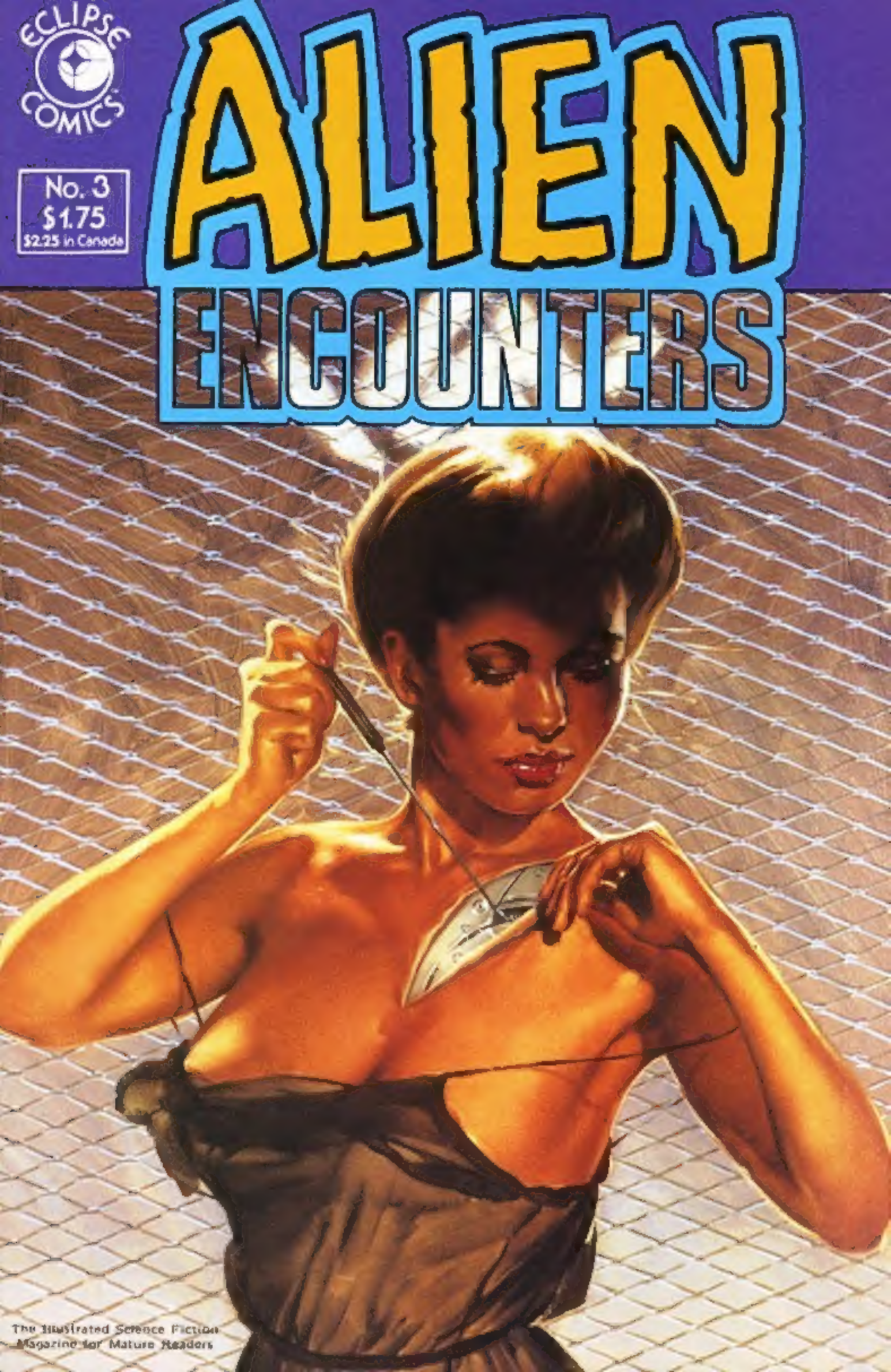
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No. 3
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ALIEN ENCOUNTERS
The Illustrated Science Fiction Magazine for Mature Readers

The PENUMBRA

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ON THE RACKS

MR. MONSTER no. 3
Alan Moore and cover artist Steve Bissette join the team this issue with a story called "The Riddle of the Recalcitrant Refuse!"

THE OFFICIAL TEEN TITANS INDEX no. 3
Everything you ever wanted to know about The New Teen Titans with cover reproductions included!

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THE NEW DNAgents no. 1
We wanted to make sure this new ish looked great so we pushed back its release until now. Don't miss it!

AXA no. 7
Another great 64 page black-and-white book featuring this heroine of the future! Two complete stories!

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The first of a 2-issue Micro-Series collecting the art of one of the best modern horror artists!

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REESE'S PIECES no. 2
Part 2 of the Micro-Series featuring hard-to-find gems drawn by Reese. All stories in color for the first time!

Continued from Mr. Monster no. 3

AS I WAS SAYING: It's been a few years, in fact, since I first got the idea to write a "tell-all" series about the comics industry. By now, as you probably know, Roger Stern is no longer writing Hulk stories in a tiny apartment, and for all I know, Jim Starlin has gone on to trade his fancy sports car in on a Honda Civic Hatchback.

But like an old war wound that bothers one when it rains, the lure of gossip-mongering is always with me, and tonight it craves fulfillment.

If you think I'm gonna tell you about anybody's sex life, however, you must think I'm purely stupid. Sure, I know all, but I don't tell all about *that* stuff. Nor will I tell you exactly who in this business is a certifiable loonie. You'll just have to ask someone else.

But if you like dumb secrets, the kind nobody in their right mind gives a good gol-dang about, then Cat's Tell-All is for you. And to make it even more attractive, I'm going to put a little heading at the beginning of each section, and that will give you the name of the person I am telling you all about. If it says "Mark Evanier" on it, for instance, you won't expect to see anything in that section on the subject of George Perez. That is just simple logic. The idea here is that you can sort of skip over the parts you know in advance you will not want to read. Although you may miss something crucial. You never can tell.

Okay. Since I started out by using Mark Evanier as an example, I think we can begin the whole series with him. Here goes . . .

MARK EVANIER: Since Mark already has his own personal tell-all column, in the pages of *Crossfire*, this is going to be hard. Let's see. . .

The other day Mark told me that he's not French, despite his name, and that it was given to a relative of his by an immigration official. But before he could tell me what the name had been prior to that governmental intervention, he got another call in on his call-waiting thingie on his phone and we both forgot about it when he came back on the line.

The best secret I know about Mark is that he gets more other calls on his call-waiting thingie while we're on the phone than any other comics person I know.

Secret number two about Mark is that he has more comics in his collection than you do. No matter who you are.

He also collects refrigerator magnets. His entire refrigerator is covered over with them. His house has beautiful Spanish tiles in the downstairs area and incredible fake Morroccan style tiles in the bathrooms. He is the Tile King of Los Angeles Comicdom. Sergio Aragones helped him discover some tiles in his livingroom that he didn't even know he had. Sergio is the Official Tile Archeologist of Alta California.

Final secret about Mark — he did the logo designs for the T-shirts worn by an improv theatre group called Instaplay. I won't tell Mark's fans to drop by the Instaplay shows in the hopes of seeing him in the regular Saturday night audience, but if you like the idea of improvised musical comedies, check it out. And while you're there, look for the guy with the big feet.

TOM YEATES: Tom lives in a little house overlooking the place where the Russian River meets the Pacific Ocean. He likes music a lot, and he listens to the radio, tapes, or records while he draws.

He has a cat named Keefo, an orange-and-white tiger striped neuter. I like this cat a lot. He is very calm about life.

Unlike most other comics artists who live alone, Tom actually keeps food in his refrigerator. His house is always clean and neat. His biggest moral flaw is that he has never repotted his jade plant and it looks like it may be dying because it's rootbound. Repot it, Tom!

Continued in Reese's Pieces no. 1

catherine yronwode

ALIEN ENCOUNTERS ™ no. 3, October 1985. Published by Eclipse Comics, P.O. Box 199, Guerneville, CA 95446. catherine yronwode, Editor. Dean Mullaney, Publisher. 'The Heroine' © 1985 James Brock. 'Mother Knows Best' © 1985 Dixon/Elmore. 'Claustrophobia' © 1985 Henry/Beikie. 'Relativity' © 1985 P. Alexander/Michelucci. Cover art © 1985 Mick Austin. All other material © 1985 Eclipse. Film by S.M. Graphics. Printed in Canada.

THINGS AREN'T AS THEY SEEM.

THEY'RE OUT THERE SOMEWHERE... WAITING FOR ME.

I'M TIRED-- HUNGRY-- I'VE BEEN FIGHTING ALL DAY. MOST OF MY GEAR IS GONE. EVEN MY PERSONAL FORCE-FIELD IS DOWN.
BUT I WON'T GIVE UP.
I'LL FIGHT TO THE END... LIKE FATHER.
THOSE BUTCHERS.
GIVEN TIME, I MIGHT AT LEAST BE ABLE TO REPAIR MY TRANSDUCER. INSTEAD OF ABSORBING ENEMY FIRE. LAST TIME THE FEEDBACK NEARLY KILLED ME.
IT NEEDS A COMPLETE OVERHAUL. BUT I DOUBT THEY'LL GIVE ME TIME FOR THAT.
I'LL BE LUCKY TO GET TEN MINUTES TO REST, NEVER MIND ENOUGH TO--
THEY'RE HERE.

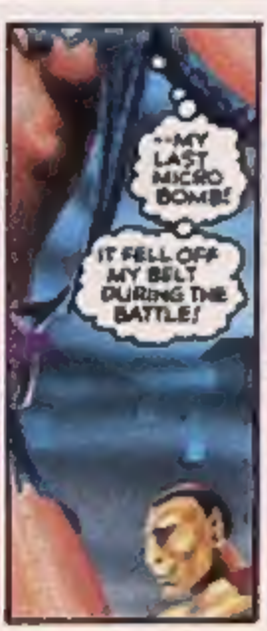
MOST OF THEIR GEAR IS PIECEMEAL. GOOD. I'LL CONCENTRATE ON DISPOSING OF THE ONES ARMED BEST, FIRST.
BEWARE! SHE THREW SOMETHING! SOMETHING SMALL!
THE BLOODTHIRSTY--!
HIS FRIENDS ARE SWARMING ALL AROUND ME AND THE SNIPER'S SHOOTING ANYWAY!
WORSE STILL, THEY ALL WANT ME SO BAD, I DON'T THINK THEY CARE!
THAT MAKES IT ALL THE MORE LIKELY HE'S GOING TO CONNECT SOMEWHERE...
...UNLESS I DO FIRST!

I NEED A BREATHER.
CAN'T KEEP UP THIS PACE MUCH LONGER.
SOMEBODY'S BEHIND THAT WALL OVER THERE. BETTER --WAIT?
THERE'S A NOISE BEHIND ME!
NO!
A TANGLER-MINE?
MRR!
KISS IT GOODBYE, WITCH!
UHHG!!
CRAP!
HAVE TO TAKE THESE MEN FAST--GET TO THE ONE IN THE BATTLE ARMOR.
I'M SO WASTED. I FAILED TO NOTICE HIM BEFORE.

THE SUIT'S GUN MUST BE LOSING POWER, OR IT'D HAVE CUT THROUGH HIS LEG INSTEAD OF JUST FRACTURING IT.
AIEEGGH!

SPIN-- RELEASE-- PERFECT!
NOW, IF I'M QUICK, I CAN GET THE LAST ONE BEFORE HE CAN...

WHAT THE-- THAT OBJECT HE'S POKING UP--
--LOOKS LIKE--


--MY LAST MICRO BOMB!
IT FELL OFF MY BELT DURING THE BATTLE!

I'LL NEED MY BLASTER TO STOP HIM FROM HERE!
I DROPPED IT SOMEWHERE BEHIND ME WHEN THE TANGLER--
--OH NO!

ONE MORE CHANCE. MY TRANSDUCER WON'T STORE ENERGY ANY-MORE, BUT IF IT'S NOT COMPLETELY INOPERATIVE...

MAYBE IT WILL STILL CONDUCT IT.
TOO LATE!
FATHER... I'VE FAILED.
FORGIVE M--
I--I'M ALIVE!
IT'S OVER!
GOOD THING MY AIM WAS ON--SHE WOULDN'T HAVE GIVEN ME ANOTHER CHANCE.
SIXTEEN OF US--AND SHE WASN'T EVEN TIP-TOP!
WHY'D THE OLD MAN HAVE TO DO IT HERE?
BLAST!
IF HE'D HAVE CHOSEN A COLONY CLOSER TO HOME TO MURDER HIS BROTHER, HE'D HAVE BEEN PUT TO DEATH THERE AND POLICE RESPONSE WOULD HAVE BEEN QUICKER.
WE KNEW HE WAS AN INVENTOR, SURE... BUT WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT HE HAD ACCESS TO THAT KINDA HARDWARE?
HECK! EVEN KNOWING THAT--

WHO'D IMAGINE ONE LITTLE ROBOT COULD DECIMATE A WHOLE CITY?
FIFTY THOUSAND PEOPLE--GONE BECAUSE OF A ONE-IN-A-MILLION FREAK.
WHEN THE HOME WORLD MILITIA COMES, THEY'LL PROBABLY PIN A MEDAL ON ME.
BUT AFTER ALL THIS SENSELESS-NESS... I DON'T FEEL MUCH LIKE A HEROINE.
JUST GOES TO SHOW, I GUESS... THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY SEEM.

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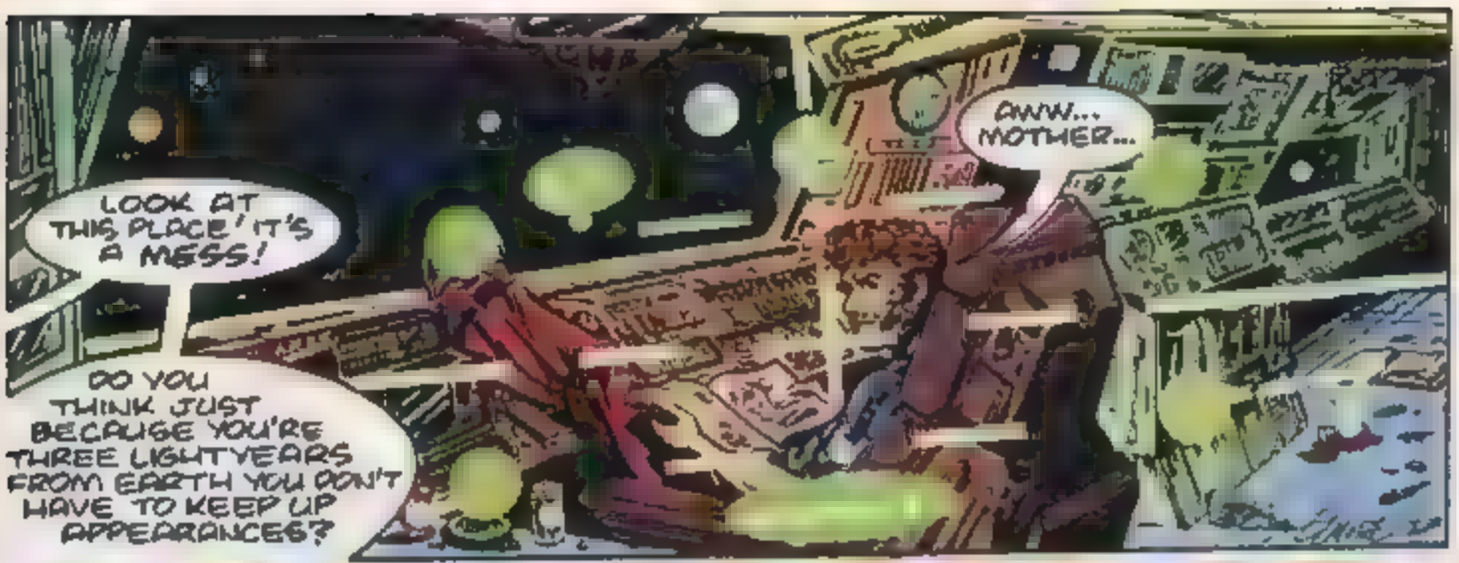
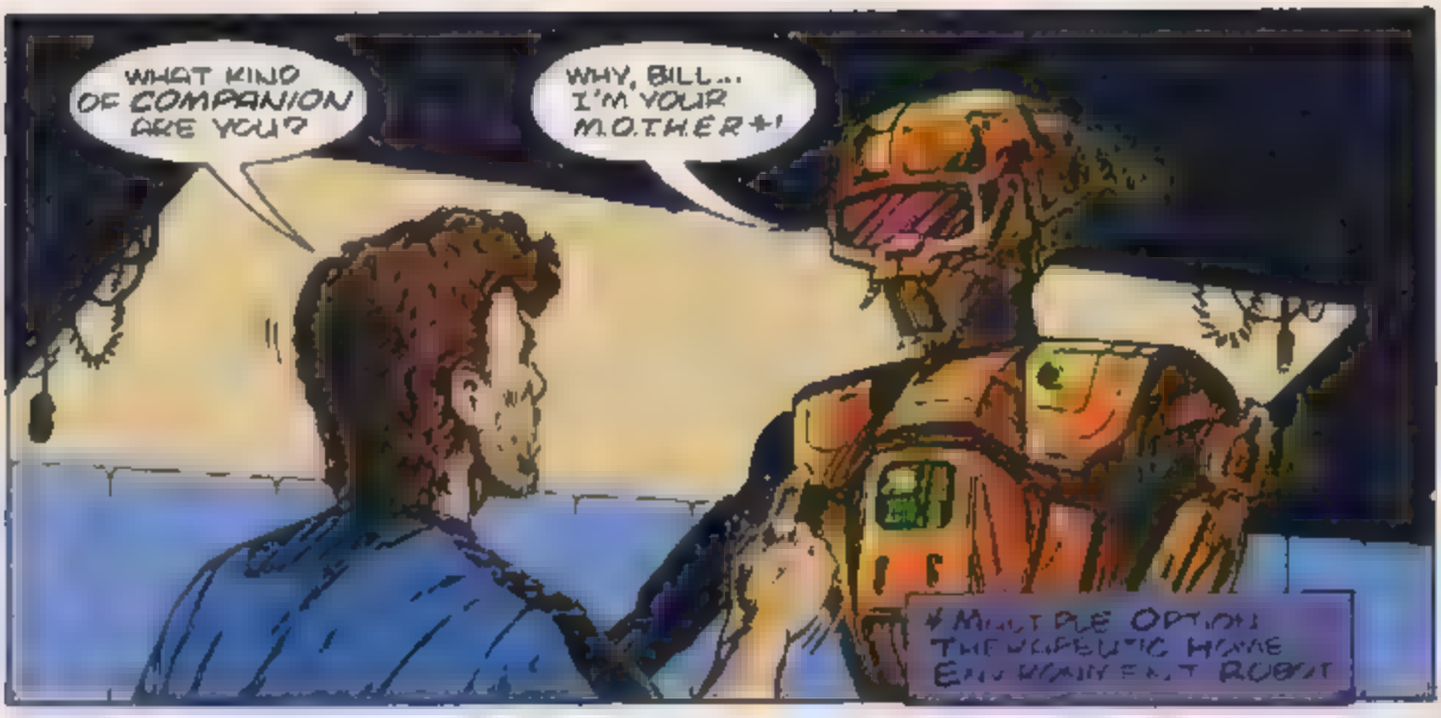

LOOK AT THIS PLACE! IT'S A MESS!
AWW... MOTHER...
DO YOU THINK JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE THREE LIGHTYEARS FROM EARTH YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP UP APPEARANCES?

M.O.T.H.E.R.

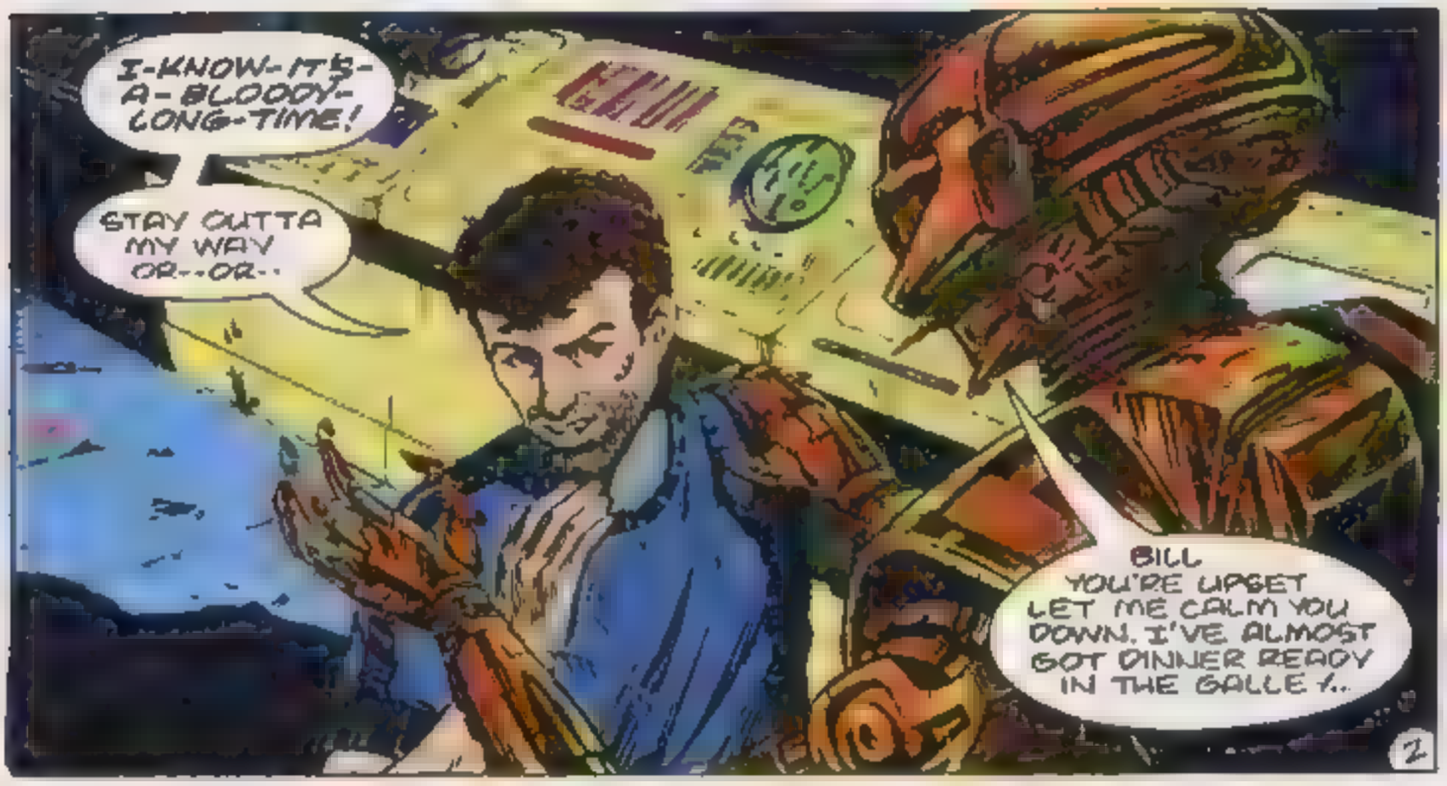
DON'T "AW, MOTHER" ME, YOUNG MAN!
THIS IS OUR HOME FOR THE NEXT EIGHTEEN MONTHS! WE'VE GOT TO KEEP IT NEAT AND TIDY!
YOU KNOW I HAVE RULES ABOUT KEEPING THIS PLACE CLEAN!
HONESTLY, ONE WOULD THINK YOU LIVED IN A PIG STY!

-- KNOWS BEST

SCRIPT: BUZZ DIXON / ART: LARRY ELMORE / LETTERS: TIM HARKINS / COLORS: RON COURTNEY

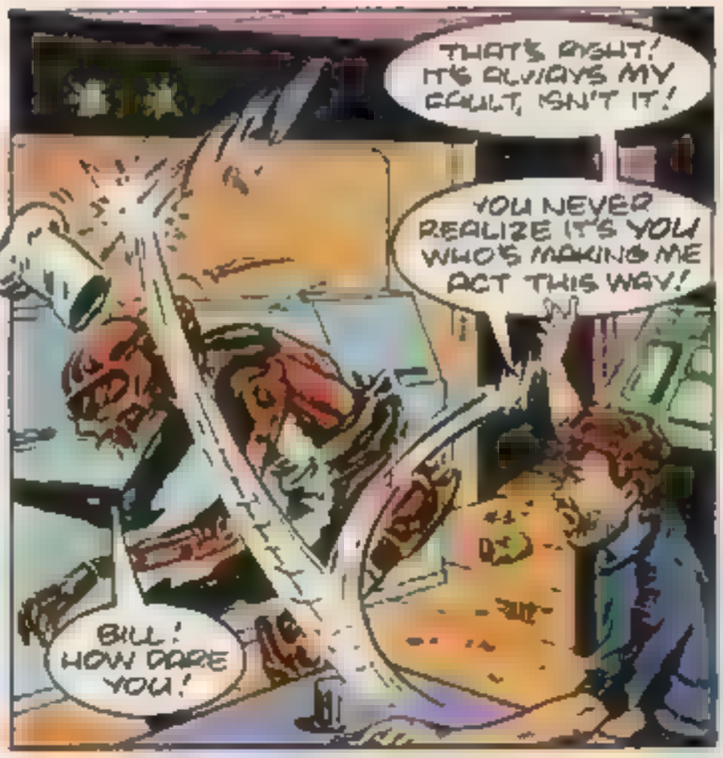

WHAT KIND OF COMPANION ARE YOU?
WHY, BILL... I'M YOUR M.O.T.H.E.R.!
* MULTIPLE OPTION THERAPEUTIC HOME ENVIRONMENT ROBOT

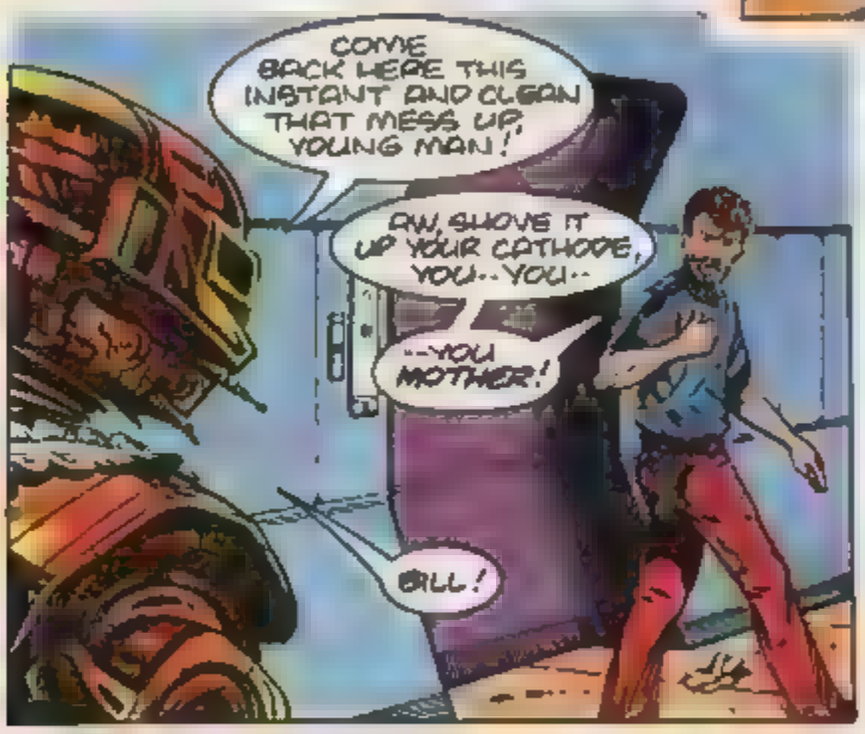
THE CORPORATION PUT ME HERE SO YOU WOULDN'T GET LONELY ON YOUR TRIP TO BETELGEUSE...
.. EIGHTEEN MONTHS IS A LO-O-O-O-ONG TIME, BILL!

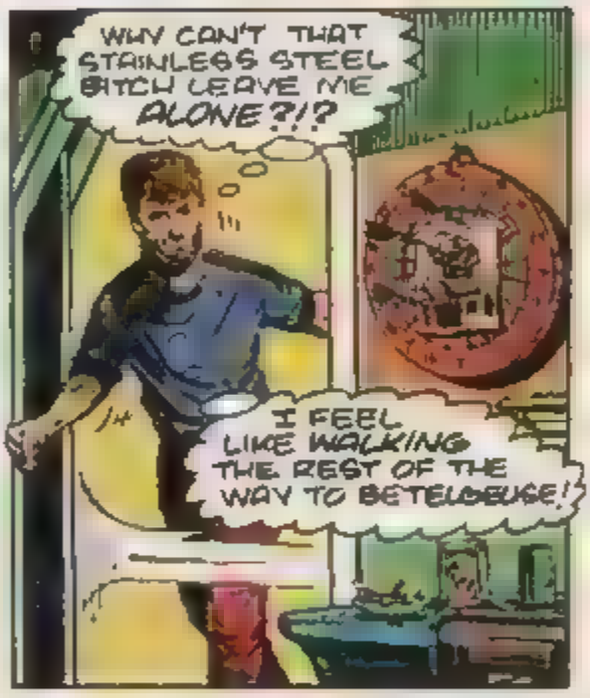

I-KNOW-IT'S-A-BLOODY-LONG-TIME!
STAY OUTTA MY WAY OR--OR--
BILL YOU'RE UPSET LET ME CALM YOU DOWN. I'VE ALMOST GOT DINNER READY IN THE GALLEY..
2

SEE? YOU'RE ALL TENSE.. LET ME HELP YOU, BILL.
YOU'RE THE CAUSE OF MY TENSION!
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? I'M PROGRAMMED TO MATCH THE PERSONALITY OF YOUR NEAREST LOVED ONE!
AHA! THAT'S JUST THE POINT!
A LOVED ONE IS SUPPOSED TO BE A WIFE OR A GIRL FRIEND OR A MISTRESS!
SO CAN I HELP IT IF YOU'RE SUCH A WASH OUT IN THE ROMANCE DEPARTMENT?
YOUR MOTHER WAS THE NEAREST LOVED ONE YOU'VE GOT!
AND JUST WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, YOUNG MAN?
I NEED SOME FRESH AIR..
DAMN! OUTTA AIR! AND I'VE ONLY BEEN HERE THREE HOURS!
AND JUST WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
OUT.
WHAT DID YOU DO?
NUTHIN'
3

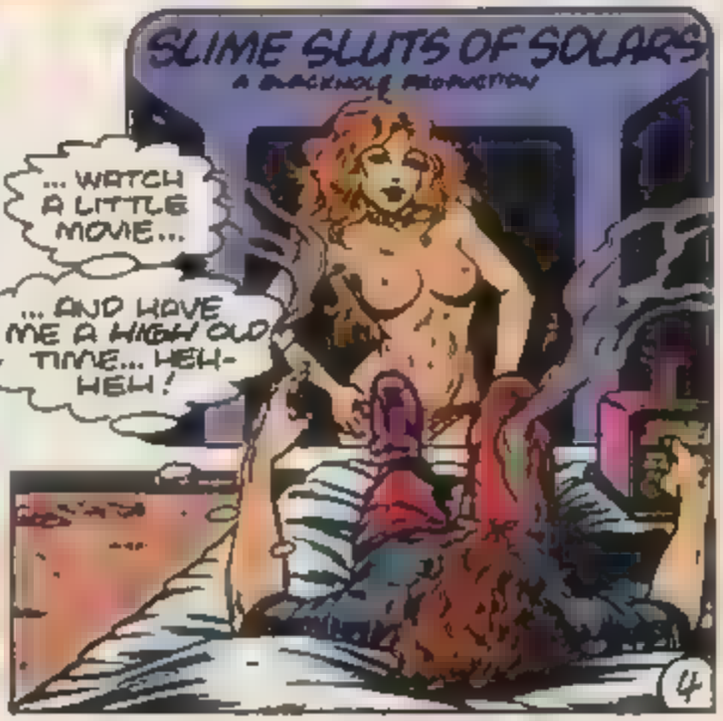
WELL, DON'T BLAME ME IF IT'S COLD!
I HAD IT ALL PREPARED-- PIPING HOT-- THEN YOU HAD TO THROW A TEMPER TANTRUM!


THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S ALWAYS MY FAULT, ISN'T IT!
YOU NEVER REALIZE IT'S YOU WHO'S MAKING ME ACT THIS WAY!
BILL! HOW DARE YOU!


COME BACK HERE THIS INSTANT AND CLEAN THAT MESS UP, YOUNG MAN!
AW, SHOVE IT UP YOUR CATHODE, YOU-- YOU--
--YOU MOTHER!
BILL!


WHY CAN'T THAT STAINLESS STEEL BITCH LEAVE ME ALONE?!?
I FEEL LIKE WALKING THE REST OF THE WAY TO BETELGEUSE!

GUESS I'LL JUST RELAX... TOKE UP ON SOME MARTIAN RED...


SLIME SLUTS OF SOLARS
A BLACKHOLE PRODUCTION
... WATCH A LITTLE MOVIE...
... AND HAVE ME A HIGH OLD TIME... HEH-HEH!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!?
M-M-M-MOTHER...!
I THOUGHT I SMELLED DOPE IN HERE!
AND PORNOGRAPHY! WELL--I'LL FIX THAT BY ERASING YOUR TAPE!
THAT TEARS IT! I TRIED TO BE PATIENT... I TRIED TO KEEP YOU FROM GETTING UNDER MY SKIN... BUT NO USE...
IF I CAN'T LIVE WITH YOU..
LET'S SEE HOW I LIVE WITHOUT YOU!
BILL! NO! WAIT! DON'T DO IT!
WE CAN GO TO THE GALLEY... BAKE SOME COOKIES... HAVE ICE CREAM...

NO! DON'T! I'M TOO YOUNG TO BE DISMANTLED!
YOU'RE NEVER TOO YOUNG, MOTHER!
BILL! *ZZZT* NO! *ZZZT* I CAN FEEL MYSELF GOING *ZZZT* BILLLLL
WHAM!
SLUG!
POW!
STRONG
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO TO ME NOW, MOTHER?
I'M SENDING YOU TO BED FOR THE REST OF THE WEEK WITHOUT YOUR DESERT!
MOTHER! HUH-WHAT-HOW--
ALL YOU DESTROYED WAS MY ROBOT BODY--MY PERSONALITY IS SAFE INSIDE THE SHIP'S COMPUTER!
AND DON'T GET ANY MORE FRESH IDEAS, SMARTY-PANTS! NOW THAT I KNOW HOW NAUGHTY YOU ARE, I'LL PROGRAM THE OTHER RESERVE MOTHER BODIES TO BE EXTRA CAREFUL!
NOW GET A BROOM AND CLEAN UP THIS MESS!
SIGH ... YES, MOTHER.
6

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SINDI SHADE
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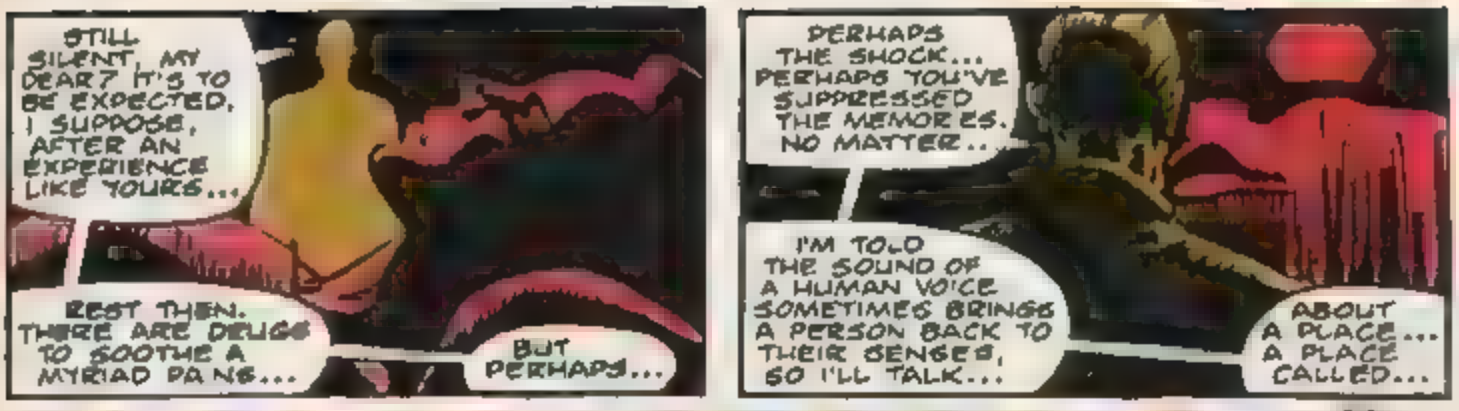
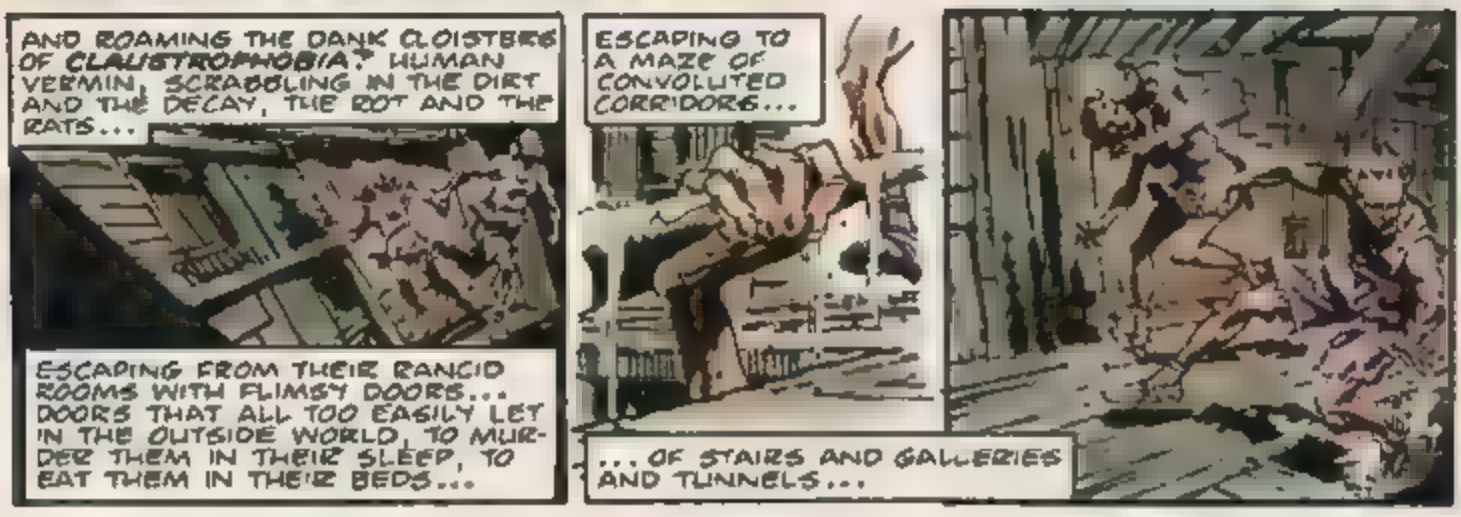
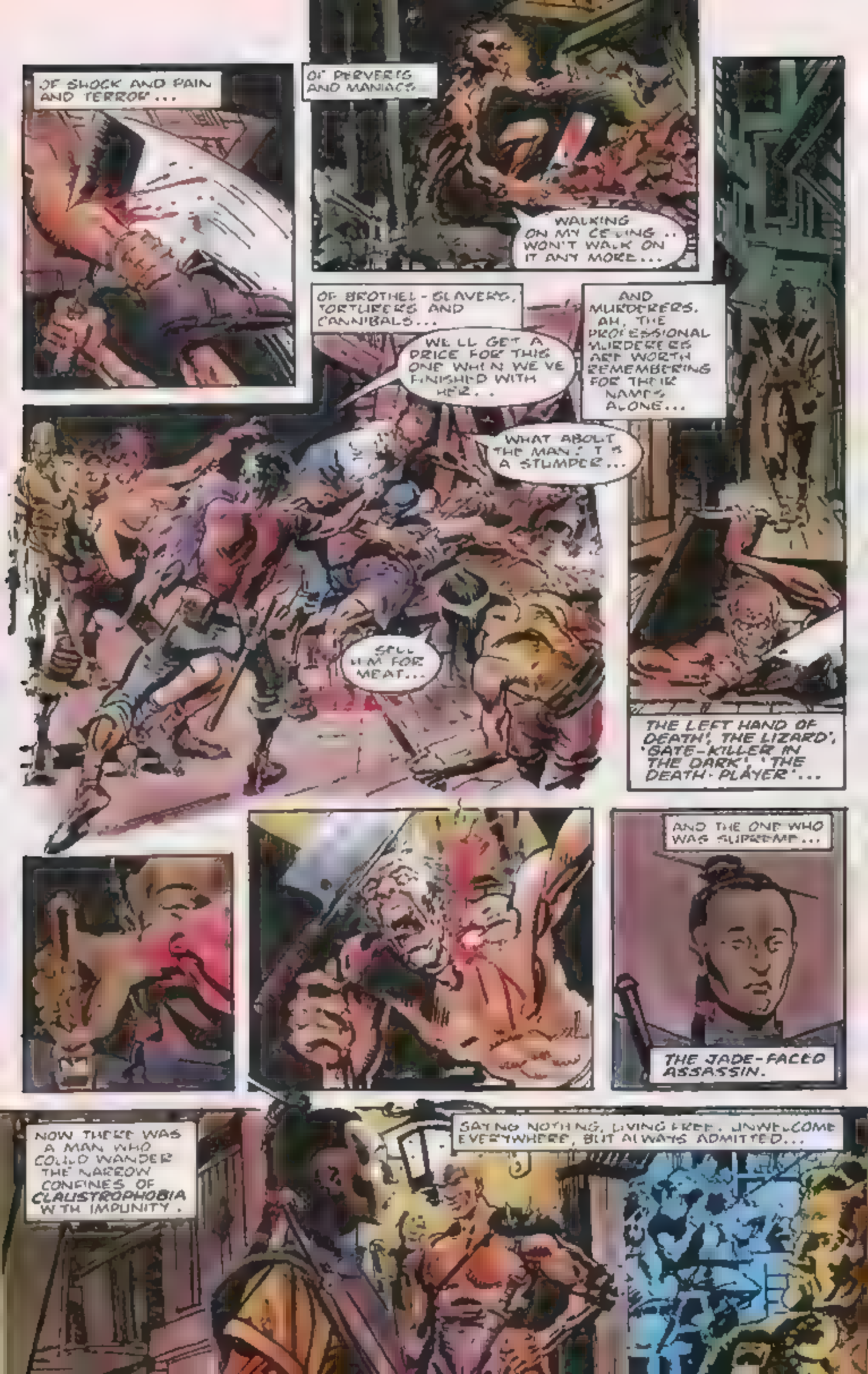

STILL SILENT, MY DEAR? IT'S TO BE EXPECTED, I SUPPOSE, AFTER AN EXPERIENCE LIKE YOURS...
REST THEN. THERE ARE DRUGS TO SOOTHE A MYRIAD PAINS...
BUT PERHAPS...
PERHAPS THE SHOCK... PERHAPS YOU'VE SUPPRESSED THE MEMORIES. NO MATTER..
I'M TOLD THE SOUND OF A HUMAN VOICE SOMETIMES BRINGS A PERSON BACK TO THEIR SENSES, SO I'LL TALK...
ABOUT A PLACE... A PLACE CALLED...

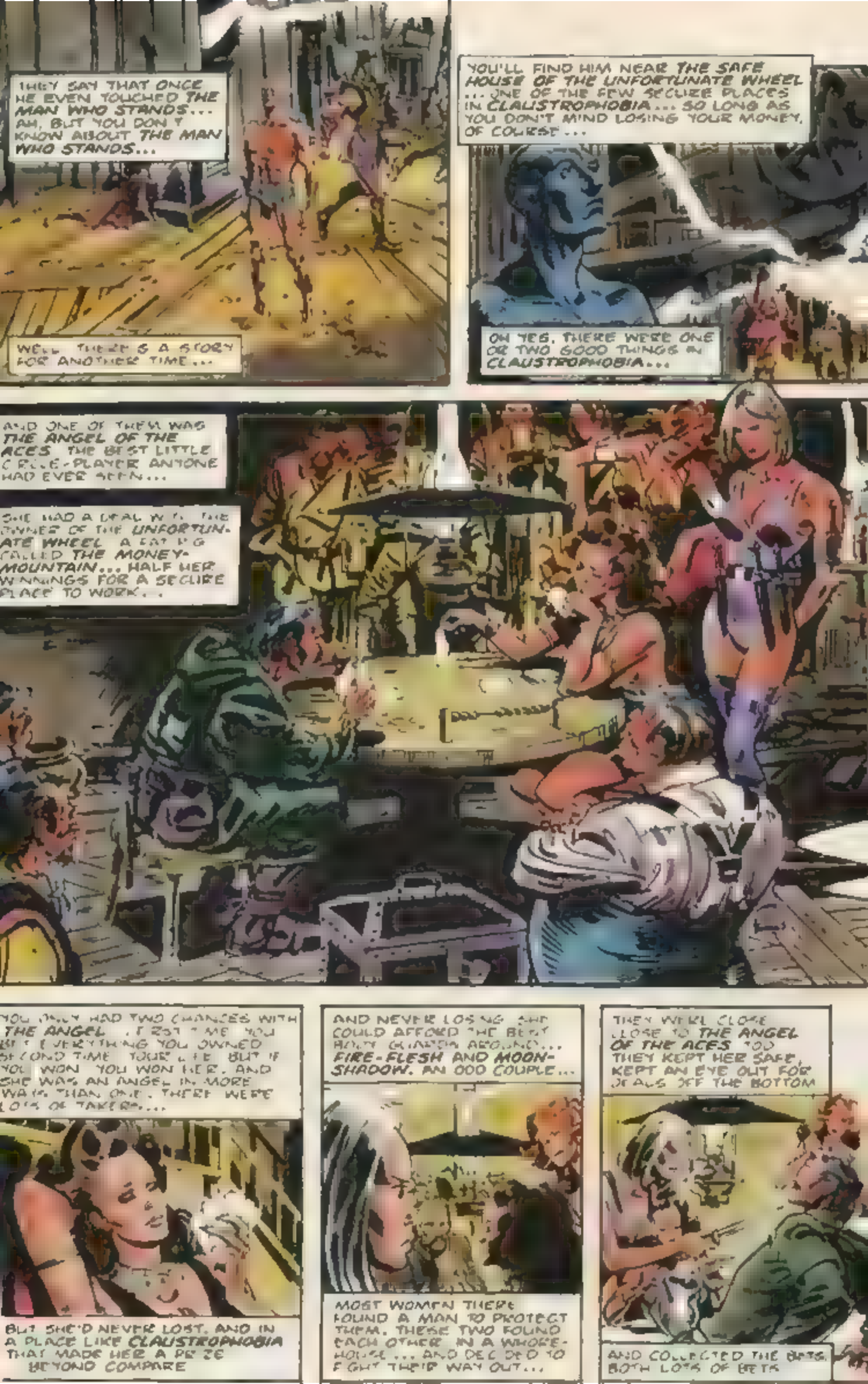
CLAUSTROPHOBIA

A PLACE THAT IS NO-PLACE IN A TIME THAT IS NO-TIME. A SHANTY TOWN PUT UP BY MADMEN...
DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT IT?
NO. IT NEVER WAS A PLEASANT PLACE. AN UNDERWORLD WITHOUT AN OVERWORLD. A RAMSHACKLE RELIC-HEAP OF DRINK AND DRUG DENS, OF GAMBLING JOINTS AND BROTHELS AND SLAVE MARKETS...
A WOODEN HELL OF PAIN WITHOUT PLEASURE, OF DESPAIR WITHOUT HOPE. A WORLD OF EVER-NIGHT, WITHOUT DAWN...

ARTIST	WRITER	LETTERER
JIM BURNS	PEDRO HENRY	ANNIE HALFACRE


AND ROAMING THE DANK CLOISTERS OF CLAUSTROPHOBIA? HUMAN VERMIN, SCRABBLING IN THE DIRT AND THE DECAY, THE ROT AND THE RATS...
ESCAPING FROM THEIR RANCID ROOMS WITH FLIMSY DOORS... DOORS THAT ALL TOO EASILY LET IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD, TO MURDER THEM IN THEIR SLEEP, TO EAT THEM IN THEIR BEDS...
ESCAPING TO A MAZE OF CONVOLUTED CORRIDORS...
... OF STAIRS AND GALLERIES AND TUNNELS...


OF SHOCK AND PAIN AND TERROR...
OF PERVERTS AND MANIACS...
WALKING ON MY CEILING.. WON'T WALK ON IT ANY MORE...
OF BROTHEL-SLAVERS, TORTURERS AND CANNIBALS...
WE'LL GET A PRICE FOR THIS ONE WHEN WE'VE FINISHED WITH HER..
AND MURDERERS. AH, THE PROFESSIONAL MURDERERS ARE WORTH REMEMBERING FOR THEIR NAMES ALONE...
WHAT ABOUT THE MAN? IT'S A STUMPER...
SELL HIM FOR MEAT...
THE LEFT HAND OF DEATH', THE LIZARD', 'GATE-KILLER IN THE DARK', 'THE DEATH-PLAYER'...
AND THE ONE WHO WAS SUPREME...
THE JADE-FACED ASSASSIN.
NOW THERE WAS A MAN WHO COULD WANDER THE NARROW CONFINES OF CLAUSTROPHOBIA WITH IMPUNITY.
SAYING NOTHING, LIVING FREE. UNWELCOME EVERYWHERE, BUT ALWAYS ADMITTED...


THEY SAY THAT ONCE HE EVEN TOUCHED THE MAN WHO STANDS... AH, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE MAN WHO STANDS...
WELL, THERE'S A STORY FOR ANOTHER TIME...
YOU'LL FIND HIM NEAR THE SAFE HOUSE OF THE UNFORTUNATE WHEEL ... ONE OF THE FEW SECURE PLACES IN CLAUSTROPHOBIA... SO LONG AS YOU DON'T MIND LOSING YOUR MONEY, OF COURSE...
OH YES, THERE WERE ONE OR TWO GOOD THINGS IN CLAUSTROPHOBIA...
AND ONE OF THEM WAS THE ANGEL OF THE ACES THE BEST LITTLE CRUCE-PLAYER ANYONE HAD EVER SEEN...
SHE HAD A DEAL WITH THE OWNER OF THE UNFORTUNATE WHEEL A BAR-B-Q CALLED THE MONEY-MOUNTAIN... HALF HER WINNINGS FOR A SECURE PLACE TO WORK...
YOU ONLY HAD TWO CHANCES WITH THE ANGEL. THE FIRST TIME YOU LOST EVERYTHING YOU OWNED THE SECOND TIME YOUR LIFE. BUT IF YOU WON YOU WON HER. AND SHE WAS AN ANGEL IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE. THERE WERE LOTS OF TAKERS...
BUT SHE'D NEVER LOST. AND IN A PLACE LIKE CLAUSTROPHOBIA THAT MADE HER A PRIZE BEYOND COMPARE
AND NEVER LOSING SHE COULD AFFORD THE BEST BODY GUARDS AROUND... FIRE-FLESH AND MOON-SHADOW. AN ODD COUPLE...
MOST WOMEN THERE FOUND A MAN TO PROTECT THEM. THESE TWO FOUND EACH OTHER IN A WHORE-HOUSE... AND DECIDED TO FIGHT THEIR WAY OUT...
THEY WERE CLOSE CLOSE TO THE ANGEL OF THE ACES AND THEY KEPT HER SAFE, KEPT AN EYE OUT FOR JEALOUS OFF THE BOTTOM
AND COLLECTED THE BETS. BOTH LOTS OF BETS

THERE WAS ONLY ONE GAMBLER NEAR HER... GHOST-WIND HANDS. HE'D COME UP THE HARD WAY, AND HE'D ALREADY PLAYED THE ANGEL ONCE...
THE NIGHT I'M TALKING ABOUT, HE WAS BACK FOR THE SECOND TIME...
IT WAS AN EVENT, BELIEVE ME. IT EVEN BROUGHT THE JADE-FACED ASSASSIN TO THE PLACE...
AND HE EVEN LET THEM TAKE THE BIG KNIFE AWAY FROM HIM AT THE DOOR...
BUT NO ONE WAS PAYING ANY ATTENTION TO AN ASSASSIN THAT NIGHT.
THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING HAPPENING THAT NIGHT...
GHOST-WIND HANDS WAS PLAYING THE ANGEL OF THE ACES... FOR KEEPS...
AND THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING WORTH BETTING ON...
WHETHER IT'D BE FIRE-FLESH OR MOON-SHADOW WHO'D KILL HIM AFTERWARDS...
SO NO ONE SAW THE ROPE.
THEY SAW THAT LOVELY LITTLE GIRL DEAL THE CARDS...
BUT THEY'D DON'T SEE THE SNAKE-WOOD HAIRPIN.
THEY WATCHED GHOST-WIND HANDS GET EDGY AND CHANGE HIS CARDS...

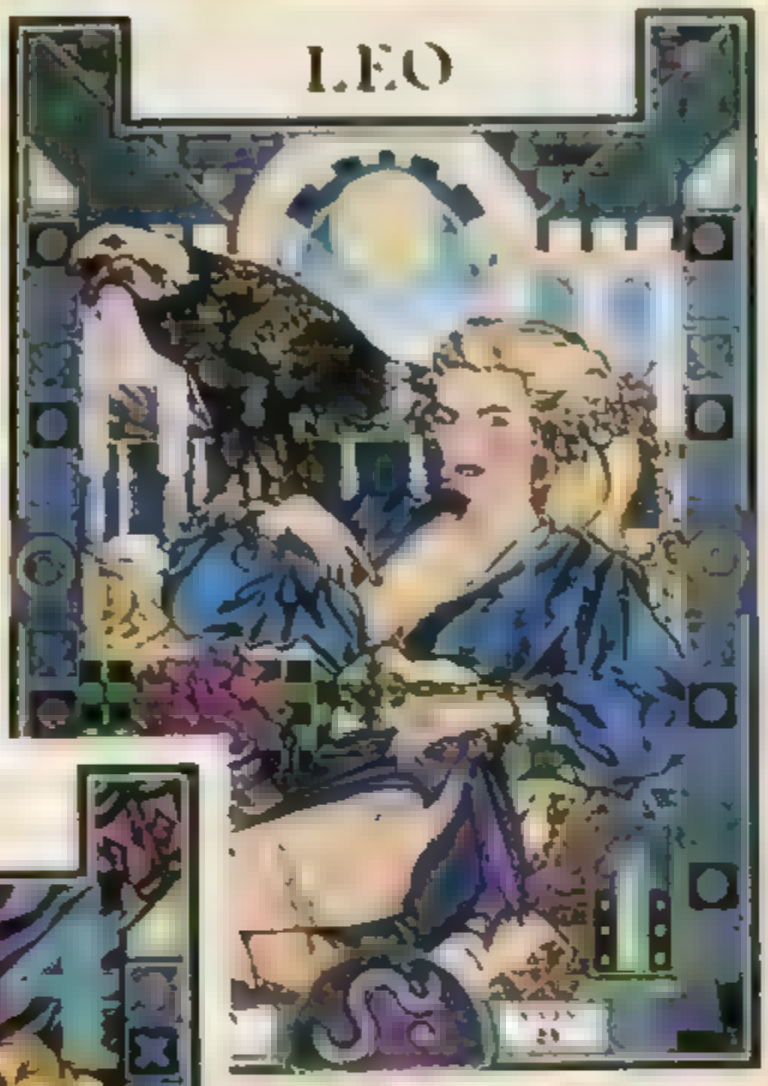
BUT THEY DIDN'T NOTICE THE 'FLUTE'.
NOT UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.
THERE WAS PANIC THEN, SHOCK. CONFUSION.
FAR TOO LATE.
UP THERE! STOP HIM!
BUT NO ONE COULD STOP THE JADE-FACED ASSASSIN.
HE WAS SUPREME.
AND THEN... HE WAS GONE.

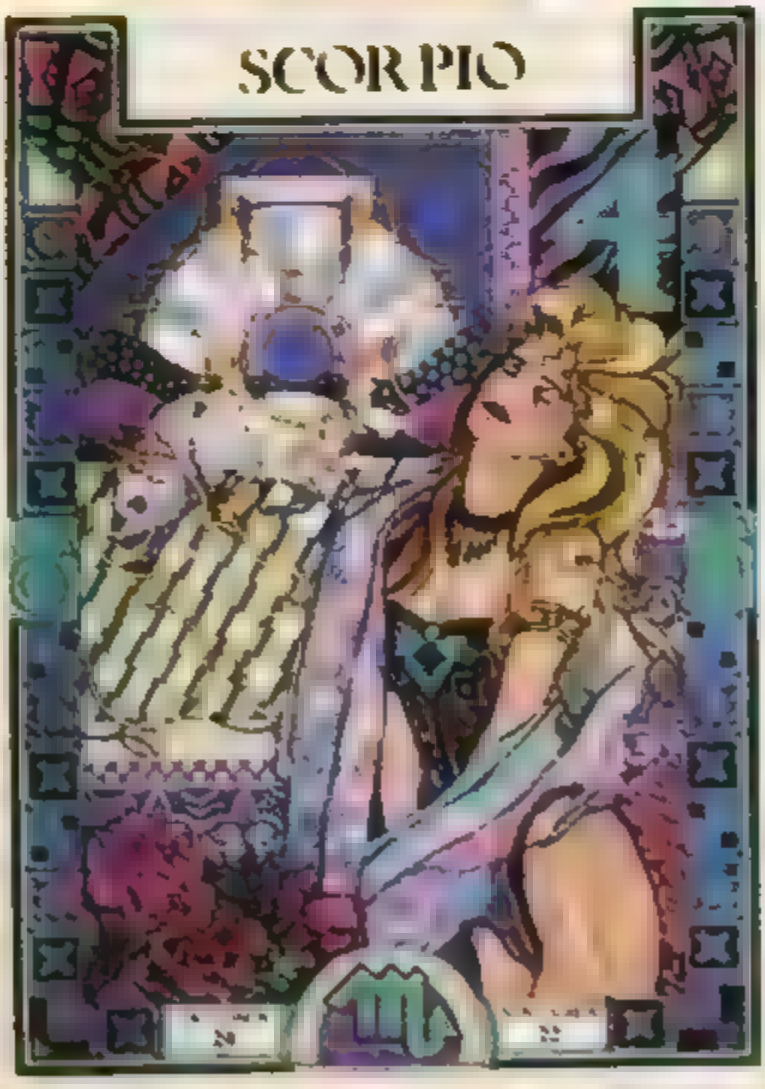
I HAD ALL BEEN VERY DISTRACTING OF COURSE...
NOW, NO ONE KNOWS HOW HE DID IT. MAYBE HE CHEATED. YOU JUST CAN'T TELL...
BUT BY THE TIME ANYONE LOOKED BACK AT THE CROOK-GAME...
GHOST-WIND HANDS WAS LAYING DOWN THE PERFECT SPREAD...
AND IT WAS ALL OVER FOR THE ANGEL OF THE ACES...
A FALLEN ANGEL.
FALLEN LIKE FIRE-FLESH...
DEAD. SHE'S DEAD...
SO WHAT WAS MOON-SHADOW TO DO NOW?
SHE THOUGHT OF KILLING GHOST-WIND HANDS, OF COURSE... BUT HE'D ALREADY LOST ALL HE OWNED SO HE COULDN'T HAVE HIRED THE JADE-FACED ASSASSIN...
POOR LITTLE MOON-SHADOW. FIRE-FLESH HAD TAUGHT HER ALL SHE KNEW...
SHE'D LOST A PROTECTOR. A LOVER.
AND IN HER FURY, SHE'D FORGOTTEN THIS WAS [redacted]...
ROTTEN, FILTHY CLAUSTROPHOBIA: WHERE DEALS WERE SOMETIMES MADE IN MONEY...
AND SOMETIMES THEY WEREN'T.

HOW ELSE WAS HANDS TO PAY THE ASSASSIN?
EXCEPT WITH A SHARE OF THE PROCEEDS?
ALTHOUGH PERSONALLY, I THINK HANDS GOT THE BETTER DEAL.
IT'S A DEPRESSING STORY, I KNOW BUT ONE YOU OUGHT TO HEAR.
STILL YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ANY MORE NOW, YOU DON'T HAVE TO SUPPRESS THE MEMORIES...
OF CLAUSTROPHOBIA... OF KILLERS... OF DEATH... OF HORROR...
YOU'RE SAFE NOW, MY ANGEL...
SAFE WITH ME...
THE END.

Rino Munzù

Internationally reknowned artist, Rino Munzu, brings you a signed, limited-edition portfolio of the entire Zodiac in 12 full color plates. Each plate is a large 16 3/4" x 11 1/2" portrait of a beautiful woman suitable for framing. The entire set is packed in its own full color presentation portfolio. Published by Tony Raiola, it is available only through Eclipse Comics.





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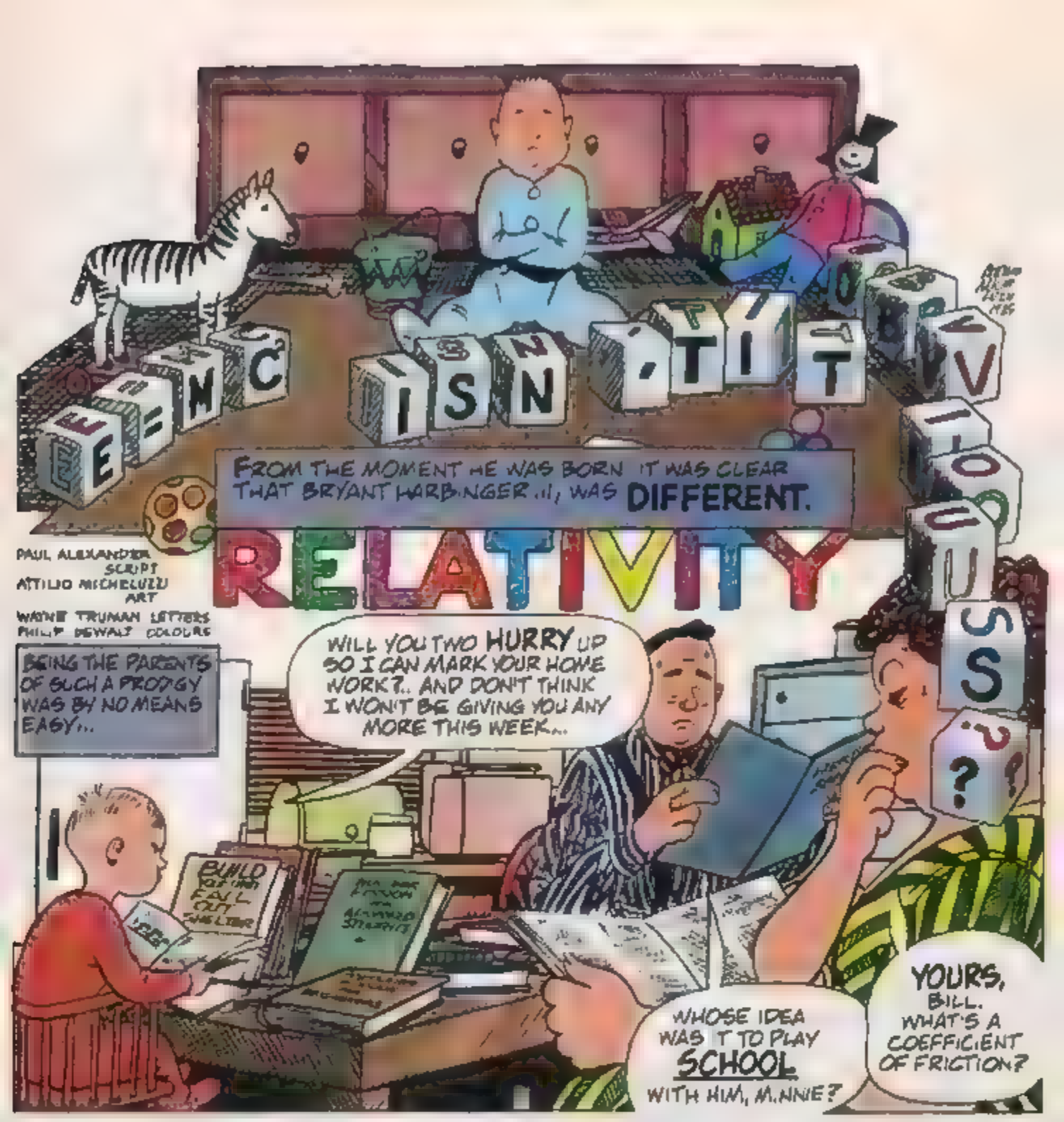
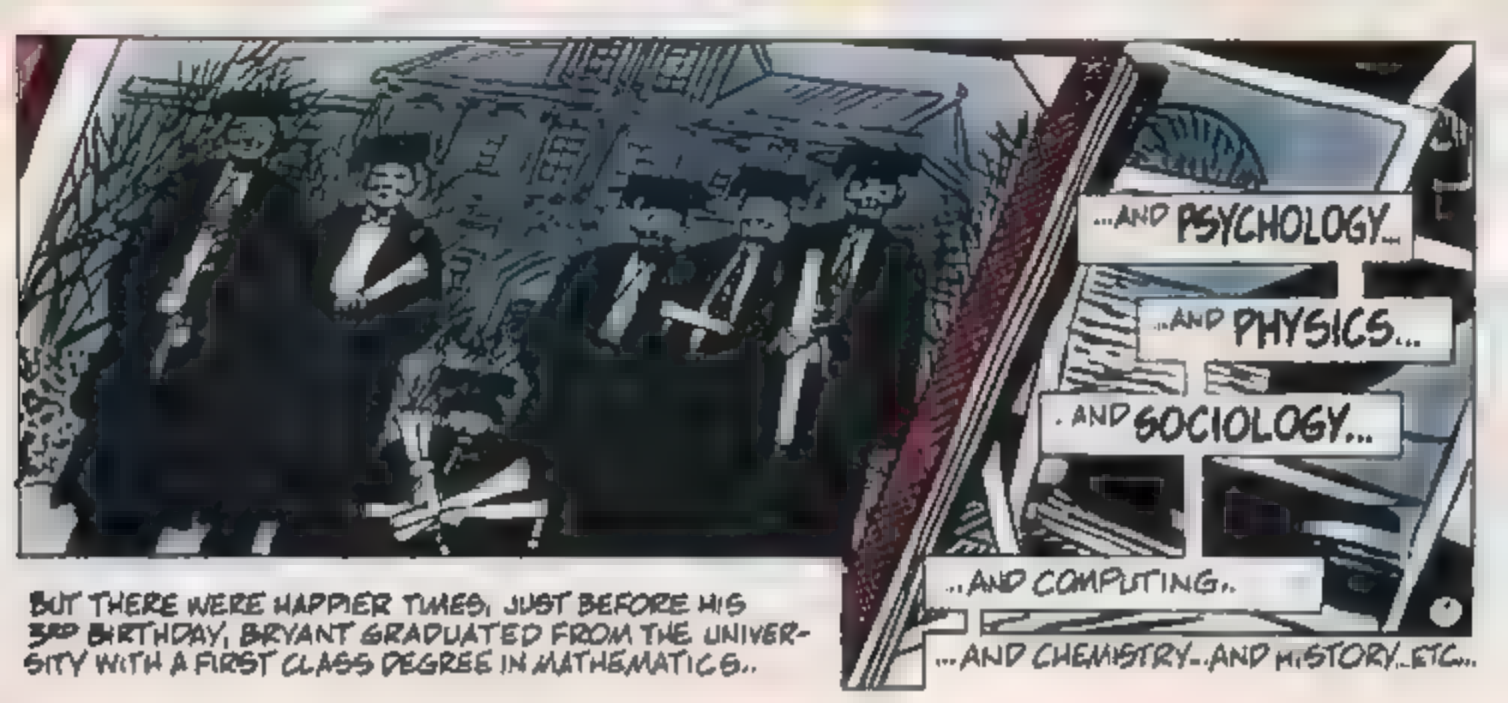
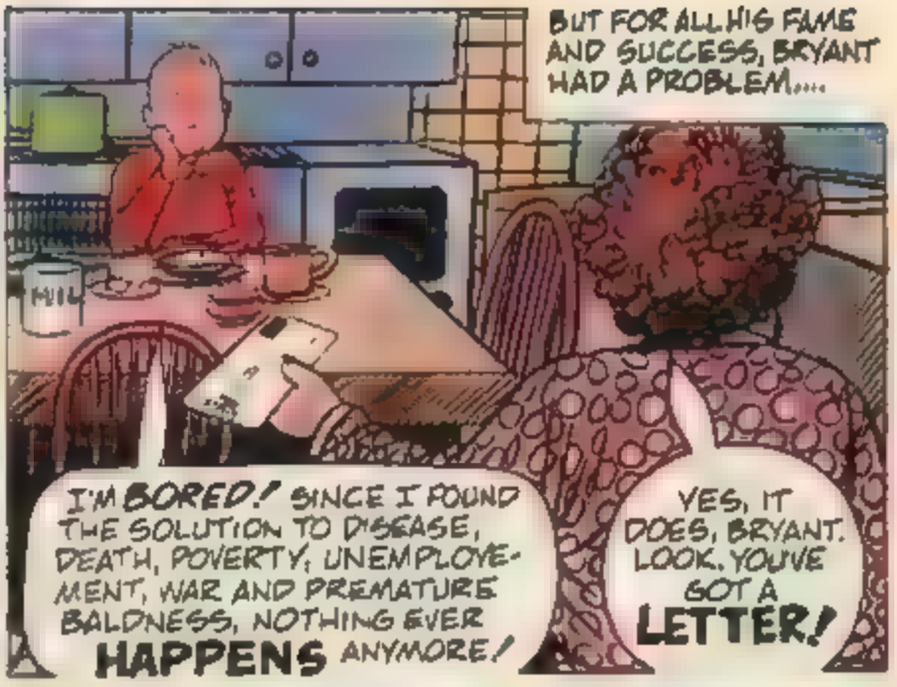

E=MC
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS??
FROM THE MOMENT HE WAS BORN IT WAS CLEAR THAT BRYANT HARBINGER III, WAS DIFFERENT.
RELATIVITY
PAUL ALEXANDER SCRIPT
ATTILIO MICHELUZZI ART
WAYNE TRUMAN LETTERS
PHILIP DEWALT COLOURS
BEING THE PARENTS OF SUCH A PRODIGY WAS BY NO MEANS EASY...
WILL YOU TWO HURRY UP SO I CAN MARK YOUR HOME WORK?.. AND DON'T THINK I WON'T BE GIVING YOU ANY MORE THIS WEEK...
WHOSE IDEA WAS IT TO PLAY SCHOOL WITH HIM, MINNIE?
YOURS, BILL. WHAT'S A COEFFICIENT OF FRICTION?

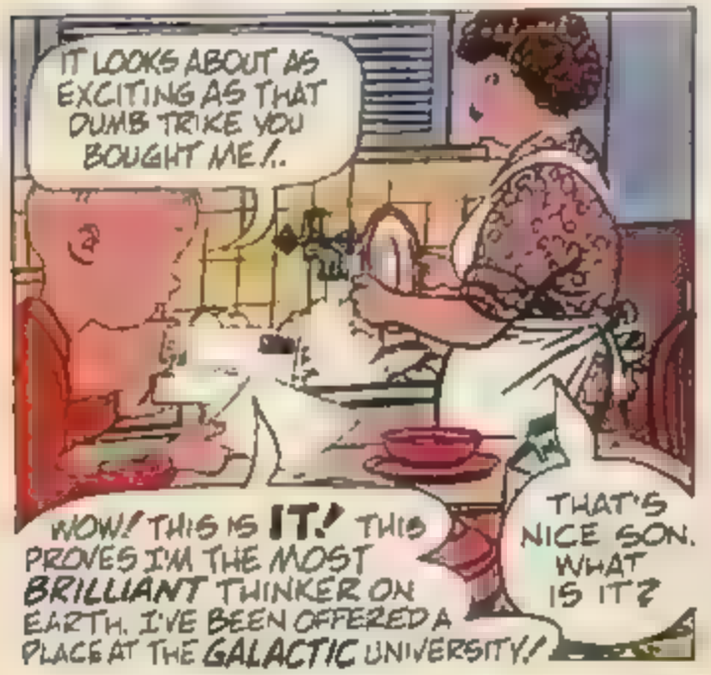

...AND PSYCHOLOGY...
...AND PHYSICS...
...AND SOCIOLOGY...
...AND COMPUTING..
...AND CHEMISTRY...AND HISTORY...ETC...
BUT THERE WERE HAPPIER TIMES, JUST BEFORE HIS 3RD BIRTHDAY, BRYANT GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY WITH A FIRST CLASS DEGREE IN MATHEMATICS..

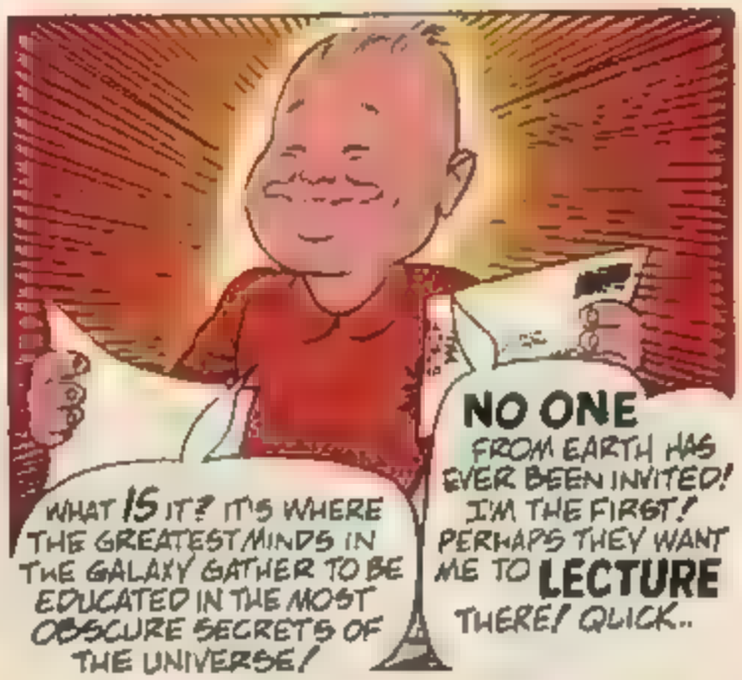
AND IN STOCKHOLM, A YEAR LATER, BRYANT BECAME THE FIRST PRE-TEENAGER EVER TO WIN THE NOBEL PRIZE FOR EVERYTHING

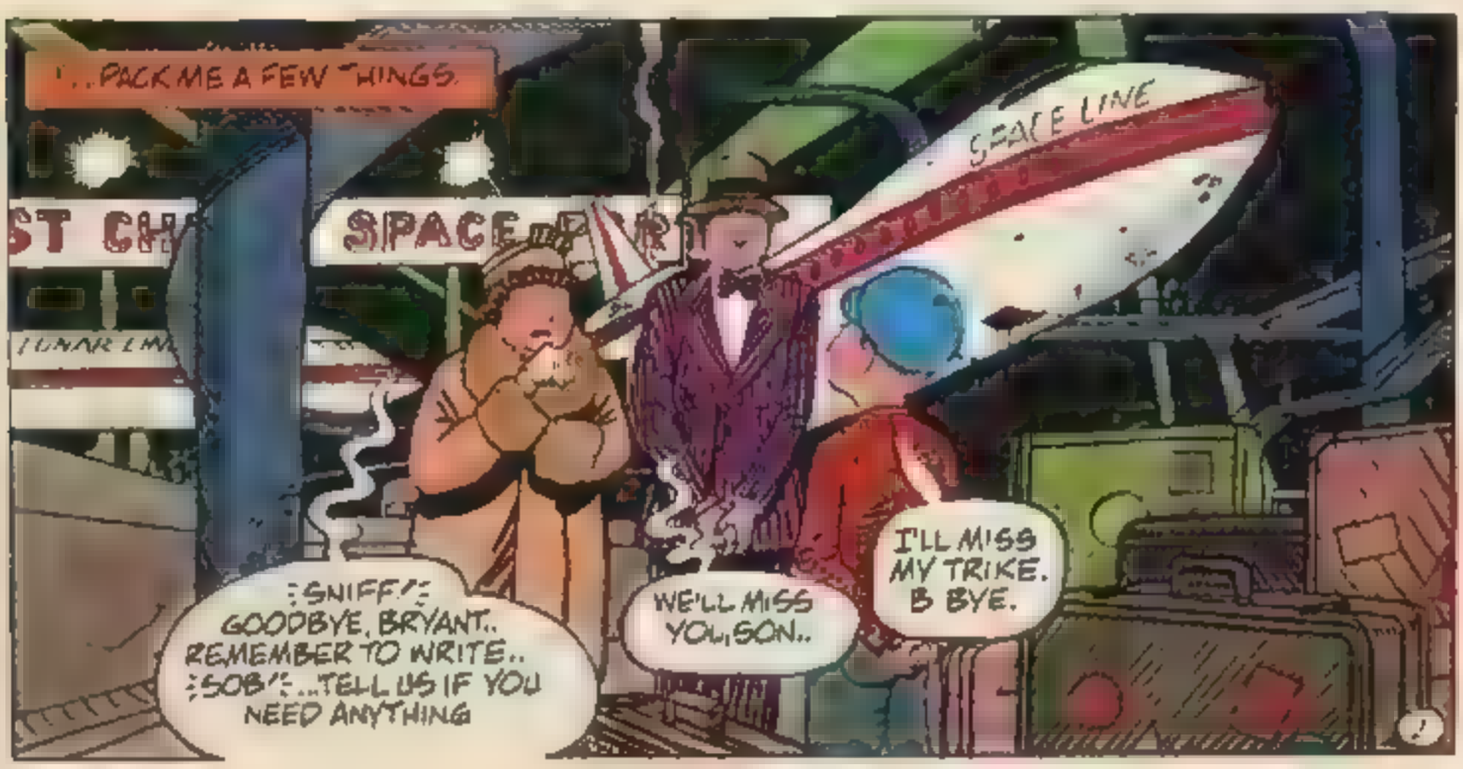
AND THE FIRST TO COLLECT IT ON A TRIKE.

BUT FOR ALL HIS FAME AND SUCCESS, BRYANT HAD A PROBLEM....

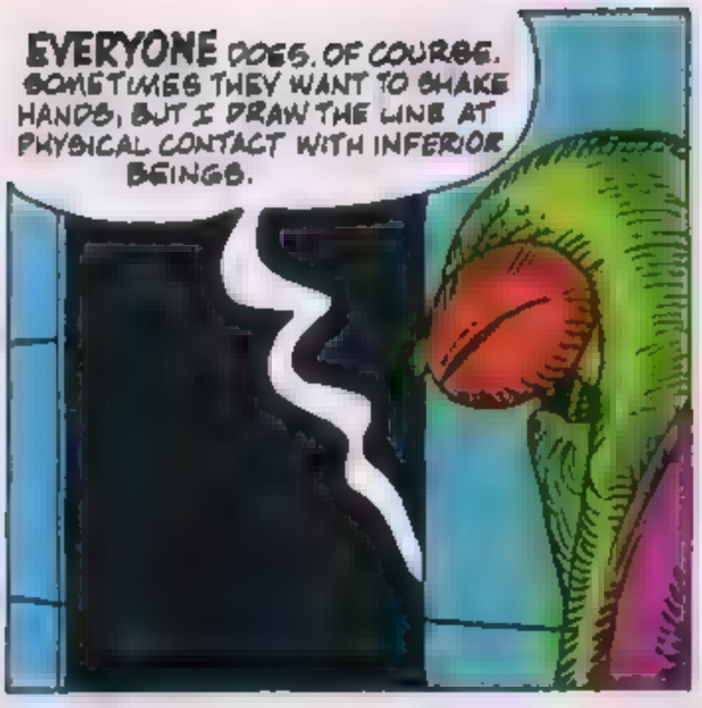

I'M BORED! SINCE I FOUND THE SOLUTION TO DISEASE, DEATH, POVERTY, UNEMPLOYEMENT, WAR AND PREMATURE BALDNESS, NOTHING EVER HAPPENS ANYMORE!
YES, IT DOES, BRYANT. LOOK. YOU'VE GOT A LETTER!

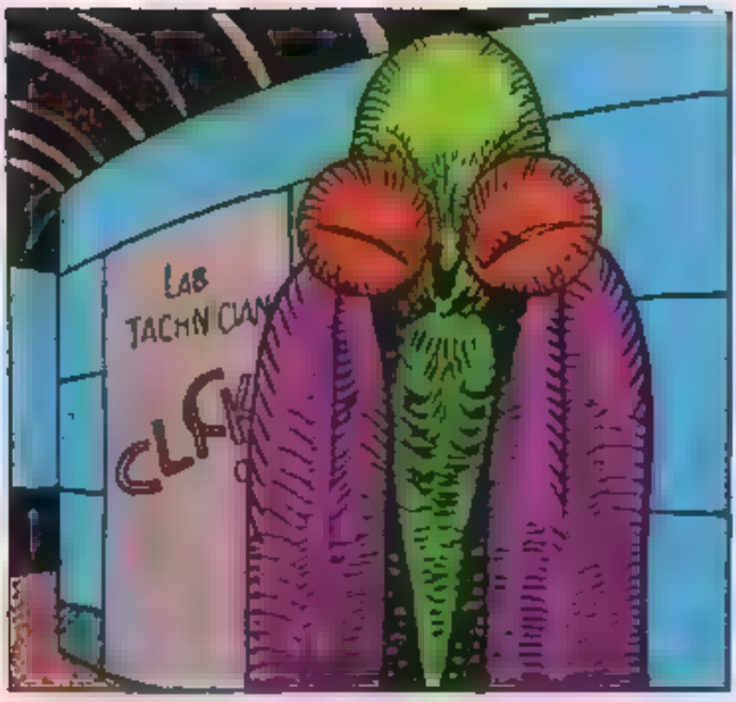

IT LOOKS ABOUT AS EXCITING AS THAT DUMB TRIKE YOU BOUGHT ME!..
WOW! THIS IS IT! THIS PROVES I'M THE MOST BRILLIANT THINKER ON EARTH. I'VE BEEN OFFERED A PLACE AT THE GALACTIC UNIVERSITY!
THAT'S NICE SON. WHAT IS IT?

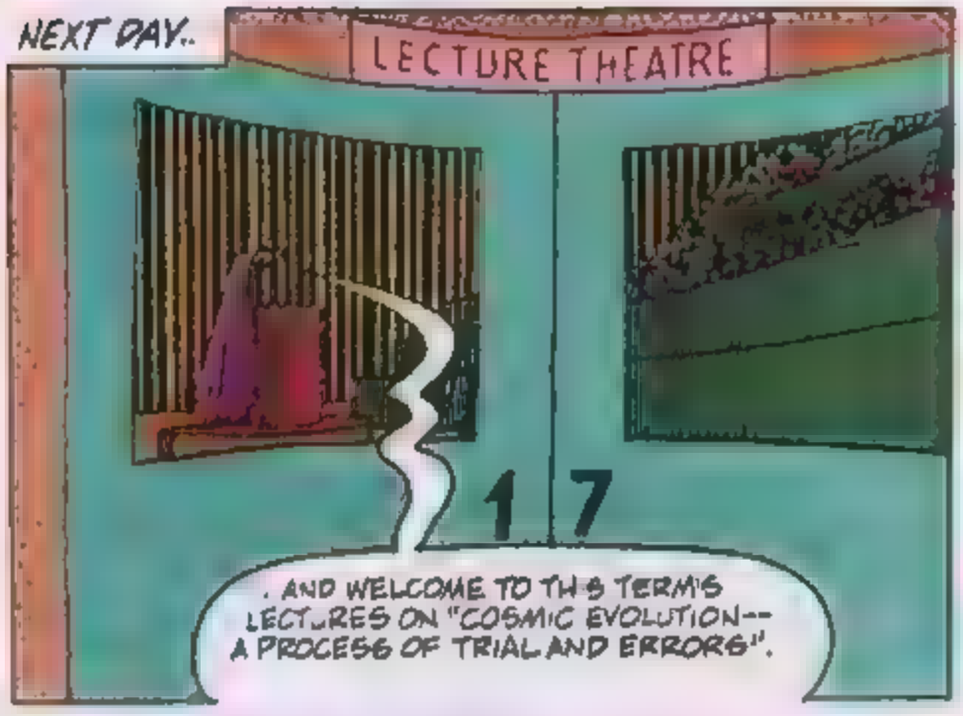

WHAT IS IT? IT'S WHERE THE GREATEST MINDS IN THE GALAXY GATHER TO BE EDUCATED IN THE MOST OBSCURE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE!
NO ONE FROM EARTH HAS EVER BEEN INVITED! I'M THE FIRST! PERHAPS THEY WANT ME TO LECTURE THERE! QUICK..

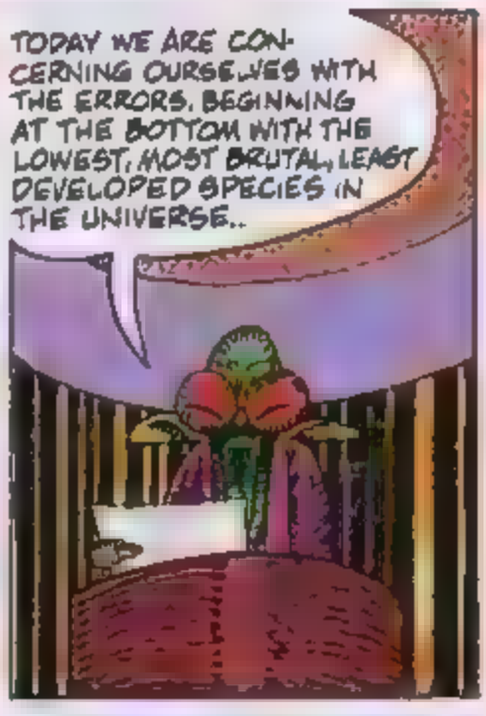

'..PACK ME A FEW THINGS.
SPACE LINE
:SNIFF!: GOODBYE, BRYANT.. REMEMBER TO WRITE.. :SOB!:..TELL US IF YOU NEED ANYTHING
WE'LL MISS YOU, SON..
I'LL MISS MY TRIKE. B BYE.

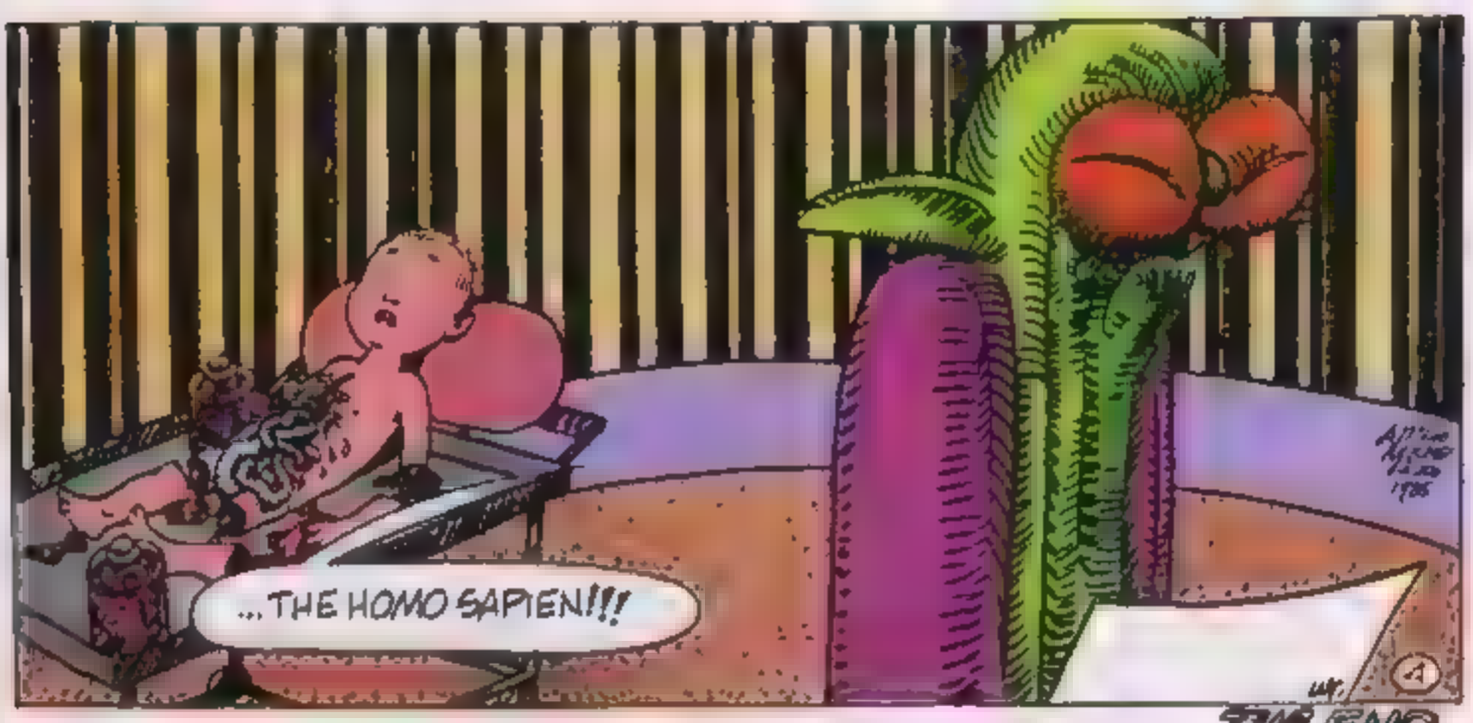
AND SO IT WAS THAT THE MOST BRILLIANT INTELLECT IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD FOUND HIMSELF STANDING ON THE PLANET GRAD/U-8, BEFORE THE DREAMING, GLEAMING SPIRES OF THE GALACTIC UNIVERSITY.
HEY, YOU THERE!
I TAKE IT THAT YOU ARE REFERRING TO ME.
VERY PERCEPTIVE. NOW SEE IF YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THIS IT'S A LETTER BEGGING ME TO COME HERE WHERE IS MY SUITE OF ROOMS?
COULD I HAVE A LOOK AT THAT LETTER?
SATISFIED?
OH YES, WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU. WOULD YOU FOLLOW ME?
"...I'LL SEE YOU END UP EXACTLY WHERE YOU SHOULD."
HOW MUCH FARTHER DO WE HAVE TO GO? ARE YOU TAKING ME TO A LECTURE? A SEMINAR?
NO, NO, YOUR ACADEMIC LIFE STARTS TOMORROW. TODAY IS INDUCTION DAY--WE HAVE TO PREPARE YOU FOR WHAT'S TO COME. HERE WE ARE
IF YOU'LL JUST STEP INTO THIS ROOM, YOU'LL BE DULY PROCESSED WON'T TAKE LONG.
IT BETTER NOT! I WASN'T ASKED HERE TO SIT AROUND. I HOPE NO ONE'S GOING TO ASK ME FOR MY AUTOGRAPH.
3


EVERYONE DOES, OF COURSE. SOMETIMES THEY WANT TO SHAKE HANDS, BUT I DRAW THE LINE AT PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH INFERIOR BEINGS.


LAB TACHNICIAN
CLAK


NEXT DAY..
LECTURE THEATRE
17
. AND WELCOME TO THIS TERM'S LECTURES ON "COSMIC EVOLUTION-- A PROCESS OF TRIAL AND ERRORS".


TODAY WE ARE CONCERNING OURSELVES WITH THE ERRORS, BEGINNING AT THE BOTTOM WITH THE LOWEST, MOST BRUTAL, LEAST DEVELOPED SPECIES IN THE UNIVERSE..


...THE HOMO SAPIEN!!!
4
THE END

ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY

Send your comments to:
Eclipse Comics
PO Box 199
Guerneville CA 95446

Sci Fi Fanatics,

You have no idea how happy you have made me with **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS** No. 1. Why, I literally disintegrated my leg with an Alkadian Dual Action 2001 when I saw your magazine and jumped for joy.

Seriously, I really did enjoy reading the first issue of this promising title. "Open Season" was the highlight of the entire book. As a matter of fact, I would like to see Ranger Pete Petrograde in his own title! Yes, I know that is asking a lot, but if you can't do that, could you have Pete in at least two more stories, please?

Keith Huening
5883 Kyles Station Road
Hamilton, Ohio 45011

Keith, are you sure you didn't figuratively disintegrate your leg? I sure hope it's not too painful!

I can't promise you another Pete Petrograde story soon, but even as I write this, the same creative team (Torem V Smith, scripts, Ken Macklin, art; Steve Oliff, colours) is hard at work on another tale for this very magazine — a little gem called "For Want of a Nail." And as soon as a second and third Pete Petrograde appear on my desk, they will surely go into production, never fear!

Dear Cat,

Oddly enough (or perhaps not so oddly when you consider it), although I've been a science fiction fan since childhood, I have never been much of a fan of science fiction comics.

Sure, I have scattered issues of Unknown Worlds, Mystery in Space, Mysteries of Unexplored Worlds, and s. f. based issues of My Greatest Adventure, Tales of Suspense, Tales of the Unexpected, and UFO & Outer Space, but I never really found a science fiction comic that could sustain my interest over a long period of time.

Until Alien Worlds.

I genuinely looked forward to each issue of that comic. When Pacific collapsed, I figured there was no use writing protest letters, and when it was picked up by Eclipse for only the last two issues, I was resigned to digging through old issues of Strange Adventures at the local comic shop, looking for that rare story that wasn't drawn badly or told mindlessly.

Now I see you have a comic called **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS**. The first issue was almost as good as the Alien Worlds issues. Not quite, mind you, but close enough. When I first began to read "Pretend ng," I thought it was going to be another comic story where the main interest was seeing how much nudity could be crammed into the story for no apparent reason. Instead, it was a pretty good story.

The last three stories were even better. "Open Season" was a really well done "funny alien" story (after reading H. Beam Piper I have a soft spot for "funny aliens"). Truly fine work by both artist and writer.

"Gorgonzo" was my favorite story of the issue. First rate all the way. It is not terribly easy to do a funny story with a trick ending without killing the humor of the story. Anytime Buzz Dixon wants to do a story for **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS**, I will buy it and read it.

All this was followed by a nice two-pager by Marc Hempel. Some of the best stories I've seen in s.f./fantasy comics have been short-short stories (I still remember "Please Don't Cry, Johnny" from House of Secrets No. 91 as being among my favorite comic book stories) and I hope you continue featuring these brief science fiction stories.

I hope you will obtain work from people who can do good stuff without a monthly deadline hanging over them. I would enjoy seeing art by Dave Stevens, Adam Kubert, Rick Veitch, Frank Brunner, and even Carmine Infantino and scripts by people like Mark Evanier, Len Wein, Marty Pasko and Steve Gerber. These guys know how to write (and draw) very strange and very entertaining comics.

T.E. Pouncey
Wichita, Kansas 67208

Well, T.E., for someone who has "never been much of a fan of science fiction comics," you seem to have quite a wide-ranging collection. To respond to your requests in order: Yes, you will be seeing lots more of Buzz Dixon's script work here and in our companion title, **TALES OF TERROR**. *Dave Stevens is at work on new* **Rocketeer** *stories right now, but look for his covers on our pre-Code horror comic,* **3-D Seduction of the Innocent**, *and on a pre-Code romance comic reprint called* **True Love**. *Rick Veitch and Steve Bissette just produced a two-part collection of their work for us, titled* **Bedlam**! *(It's sf/horror oriented) and we plan to put together another collection featuring both of them early in 1986. Frank Brunner produced the horror-oriented* **Unknown Worlds of Frank Brunner** *for us in August, and he has an open invitation to contribute new material whenever his schedule allows. Mark Evanier has promised something soonish, and as I write this, a nice Len Wein script is on my desk, awaiting only final editing. How is that for meeting your expectations? Meanwhile, we also have Scott Hampton hard at work on a 14-page* **TALE OF TERROR** *and Tim Conrad is writing and drawing his first* **ALIEN ENCOUNTER** *story. And then there's Timothy ("Speedy") Truman, who has already turned in two of those short-short stories you seem to like so much. Speaking of which. . .*

Cat,

I thought **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS** No. 2 was superior to the first issue both in story contents and graphic illustrations, but I do have one major gripe that I hope you'll be able to remedy some time in the very near future. There has been as yet no contribution from Timothy Truman!

For my money, Timbo's the best damn artist/person in all of comicdom, and until I get a(nother) dose of his radical, action-packed brand of story, I'll unfairly compare every other story that appears with what I thought Tim would have done in this situation. In short, everyone else's story (to me) is a pretender, and only Tim is a contender.

Please don't take offense to these comments. They are not meant to slight any of the talented folks who contribute(d) to this title in any way or form. Rather, they are meant to glorify m'pal Tim's awesome achievements.

The Human Trumanite
Route 4, Box 120
United States of America

Folks, this guy is indeed for real. If I remember right, by his distinctive handwriting, he also signs his letters "Uncle Elvis." So, Elvis, buddy ol' boy, or whoever you are, you should be pretty happy to see **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS** *No. 4, with El Timbo's 2-pager, "Invasion!" And, one can assume you are getting your regular Truman fix with the great new action-packed series,* **SCOUT**, *a title that has already proved to be such a hit that it's going from bi-monthly to monthly as of the fourth issue! (And, just between you'n'me, I kinda agree with you about Tim's status as both artist AND person. They don't make 'em no better, that I know.)*

Ms. Yronwode,

ALIEN ENCOUNTERS No. 2 really touched all bases

for me. It had four legitimate science fiction stories, a two-page lettercol, and a stunning cover that related to an interior story. All four stories this time attempted to entertain the readers rather than bombard them with more nebulous concerns. Yes, A.E. No. 2 was a well put together package.

Only "I Shot the Last Martian" was a little thin. Nine pages devoted to one story is really too much space.

On a more positive note, both "The Resistance" and "The Monster of Planet Og!" were quite enjoyable. The big surprise this issue was "Emergency Rations." Buzz Dixon crafted the finest science fiction tale I've ever read. Somehow, in a mere three pages, the impossible was done. Lots of action, suspense, an EC snap ending, and those two familiar "Alien Utterings" (hey, Cat, what a title for a letters page!) from **Weird Fantasy** No. 17. I would be remiss, however, if I understated the contributions of artists Nicholas Koenig and Willie B yberg. They produced sensational work. More from these two, please, on a regular basis. Thank you for making my favorite comic once again my favorite comic.

Michael Egan
630 Gilmour Street
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K1R 5L8

You are very welcome.

Dear catherine,

After reading the second issue of **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS**, I decided to write in and let you know what I think. I have been reading **Alien Worlds** since it started as a Pacific title (as well as **Twisted Tales**). I thought these were fine examples of s.f. and horror comics for the 80s and I was very sad to see them go with the demise of Pacific. When Eclipse announced the continuation of these books, I eagerly awaited the first issues.

Now that **ALIEN ENCOUNTERS** No. 1 has come and gone, I must agree with the comments in the lettercol of No. 2. The quality of the stories was found lacking when compared to the previous issues of **Alien Worlds**. Still, I didn't give up. I felt that I could depend on you (and Eclipse) to put out some high-quality work. The second issue lives up to that hope. To put it mildly, I was much more impressed with the second issue than with the first.

"The Monster of Planet Og!" was a wonderful lead story. From the beautiful art and coloring to the innovative layout and lettering, this one is a winner. Well written and beautiful to look at. Let's have more like it.

"I Shot the Last Martian" was an excellent story also. As I read it, it seemed more and more familiar and I started to get a little angry about someone ripping off Ray Bradbury's Martian Chronicles until I saw the dedication to him at the end. It's still a rip-off, but at least credit was given where credit is due.

"The Resistance" and "Emergency Rations" had some nice art and coloring going for them. They were certainly competent stories and I guess every one in the issue can't be "excellent."

All in all, the second issue was a tremendous improvement over the first and renewed my enthusiasm for the title.

Keep up the good work.

P.S. I like "Native Response" for a lettercol name.

Susan Lattanzio
P. O. Box 26
Ellington, CT 06029

Okay, we'll log that as the second vote for Chris Brown's lettercol name contest entry. Any other suggestions from the peanut gallery?

cat,

ALIEN ENCOUNTERS No. 2 was a major improvement over the first issue. I found the stories to be interesting and thought-provoking. There seems to be a common theme running through the stories in this issue, in that they show human beings as they are perceived from different viewpoints by entities of various sorts.

For example, "The Monster of Planet Og!" is a twist on the familiar monster-movie plot. We've all seen the stories, whether in comics or in old movies on late-night TV, in which some gruesome monster shows up and takes away a beautiful maiden; the hero rescues her and Lives Happily Ever After. That's just how this plot goes, only how the "monster" is human! It just shows how much we judge beings by their physical appearance, we humans sympathize with the human character, but if this story ever gets reprinted in a translated form for the Lithgo Realm as part of an attempt by Eclipse Comics to gain a wider galactic market, the Lithgian readers will undoubtedly cheer on the great warrior Zorg as he defeats the grotesque menace threatening his Princess.

"The Resistance" gives another view; this time from a microscopic direction. I'm not sure it really qualifies as science fiction, though, since there is no scientific basis for the anthropomorphic conversations the white cells are shown as having. However, I still enjoyed reading it.

In "I Shot the Last Martian," no living nonhuman characters appear, but Greg is seen by Matt as a "Martian" so this story too deals with an unusual perception of a human, tying in with the overall theme. One quibble: As far as I know, Mars does not have a breatheable atmosphere, regardless of what Ray Bradbury may have written in the past.

Finally, "Emergency Rations" shows a rather gruesome use which an alien species finds for humans. This is a good, original story; I can't recall seeing anything quite like it before.

In general, this issue did well at making us look at ourselves from novel viewpoints. I hope future issues continue to be at least this good.

Daniel Tobias
4730 Centre Avenue, Apt. 212
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Your insightful comments, Daniel, are the sort of thing that can cause an editor to blush. You are absolutely right about the "theme" that ties these four stories together, but I would be lying if I said we planned it that way! Many times the contents of anthology titles are determined by factors the readers should not even know about — like who got their stories in on time, how many pages there are to fill and what combination of four stories will best fill those pages. If it all comes together right, a binding "theme" is a happy coincidence, most of the time. At least, it was in this case! Or perhaps it can be seen on a meta-level as an unconscious projection of the editor's inner, unvoiced concerns, filtered through the process of selecting scripts and artists to illustrate them. I'd like to say that I know the answer to this question, but like the fish who doesn't really know what water is, I am sometimes not conscious of making editorial decisions which, in hindsight, seem to be the product of a logical thought process such as the one you seem to ascribe to me.

Life's funny that way, ain't it?

Well, enough of that heavy analytical stuff — let's talk about next issue. If ALIEN ENCOUNTERS No. 4 has a theme, it's the fact that we have lined up a truly all-star cast of creators. Tim Conrad, Timothy Truman, John Bolton and the legendary Gardner Fox are all gonna be on hand, so you be sure and make a date of it too, okay?

And while we're at it — there are still about 200 FREE ALIEN ENCOUNTERS/TALES OF TERROR posters, yours for a self-addressed stamped 9 x 12 inch envelope with 39 cents postage affixed. We have other posters too — for SCOUT, JOHNNY NEMO, MIRACLEMAN/DNAGENTS, SUN-RUNNERS, MR. MONSTER and THE ROCKETEER, and you can actually get two of 'em for your 39 cents postage, so send in today — these are nice full-colour 11 x 17 inch jobs, and you'll amaze your friends and neighbors with 'em and like that.

*Finally, let's get some lettercol naming action going here! The FIRST PRIZE, for the winning entry, will be your choice of one of the four following Eclipse books: **Women and the Comics, I Am Coyote, Comics & Sequential Art,** or **The Rocketeer Graphic Album.** Go for it!*

— catherine yronwode

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☐ Hey, don't you cats publish *Love and Rockets* too? In that case, I know I can trust your judgment: count me in for a full year's subscription (six fabulous issues) to *LLOYD LLEWELLYN*. I've enclosed $9.95 (outside U.S. $11.95)—a substantial saving over cover price!

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